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Media Release
Delaware Division of Public Health
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Got Drugs?
National Prescription Drug Take-Back Day
April 28, 2012, 10 a.m. – 2 p.m.
Disposal Sites Through Out Delaware

Got drugs? Through a collaborative effort of several state agencies and the federal Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), the public will have an opportunity to safely dispose of their expired, unused and unwanted medications on Saturday, April 28, 2012. Individuals can dispose of unwanted medicines at 31 collection sites statewide from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. The service is free and anonymous; no questions asked.

"Unused medications pose a threat to our children, our families and our environment," said Governor Jack Markell. "The National Prescription Drug Take-Back Day is a safe way to dramatically decrease the amount of unused drugs in our medicine cabinets, homes and environment."

According to the DEA, a total of 4,465 pounds of unwanted prescription and over-the-counter medications were collected in Delaware during the last drug take-back event in October 2011.

"One of the most common ways for abusers to obtain prescription drugs is by raiding the medicine cabinets and even the trash cans of friends and family members," said Attorney General Beau Biden. "But that also means that one of the simplest ways to fight abuse is to responsibly get rid of drugs that are no longer wanted or needed. The Prescription Drug Take-Back provides an easy, quick opportunity to make our homes and communities safer."

Drug Take-Back Day addresses a vital public health and safety issue. Other methods of discarding unused medicines, such as flushing them down the toilet or throwing them in the trash pose potential health and safety hazards to private and public water systems.

"Prescription drugs have been found in some Delaware water supplies where they may be accidentally ingested by humans," said Rita Landgraf, Secretary of Delaware Health and Social Services (DHSS). "The Take-Back Day is a coordinated and carefully regulated opportunity to dispose of unused, unwanted and unneeded medications. It also is consistent with DHSS's commitment to addressing prescription drug abuse in Delaware."

Each day, approximately 2,500 teens use prescription drugs to get high for the first time, according to the Partnership for a Drug Free America. Studies show that a majority of abused prescription drugs are obtained from family and friends, including the home medicine cabinet. In 2009, the Delaware Health Statistics Center reported 137 deaths in Delaware due to drug overdoses. Eighty percent of drug overdose deaths in that year involved one or more prescription drugs.

Prescription drugs should only be used by the persons to whom they are prescribed. In addition to being illegal, using unauthorized drugs can cause irreversible medical damage to our brains, heart, liver and other organs. Addiction, injuries, suicides and accidental deaths can occur when people abuse prescription drugs.

Medicines that languish in home cabinets are highly susceptible to misuse and abuse. Studies show that a majority of abused prescription drugs are obtained from family and friends; that includes drugs in the home medicine cabinet. Medications are the most common and deadly poisons of children. Persons under the influence of unauthorized prescription drugs commit crimes, cause accidents, and put other law-abiding citizens in harm's way.

"Our law enforcement officers are seeing an increasing number of prescription medications within the illegal drug trade," said Deputy Secretary Elizabeth Y. Olsen, Delaware Department of Safety and Homeland Security. "Partnering with state and federal agencies to provide citizens a way to safely dispose of leftover prescriptions reduces the likelihood that these drugs will be sold illegally in communities and on our streets."

"Coordinating the Drug Take-Back Day with the DEA and our partners is key to our work to reduce prescription drug abuse in Delaware," said Dr. Karyl Rattay, Division of Public Health Director. "Public Health has also launched a Prescription Drug Action Committee with the Medical Society of Delaware to look at the multiple causes and potential solutions to this problem."

"Drug-Take Back events are just one of the several ways we are combating the prescription drug abuse and diversion problem in Delaware," said Deputy Secretary of State James Collins. "With the public's participation on April 28, we can make a significant impact and prevent the disposed medications from causing harm."

Anyone can bring medications for disposal to 31 collection sites statewide. Prescription and over-the-counter pills, liquids, and cream medications will all be accepted - even pet medication. Injectables and aerosols are not included in the program, and will not be accepted. Collection is both free and anonymous. No questions or requests for identification will be made. Personal information should be removed from bottles and packages.

The medications will be collected in specially marked barrels or boxes, and then safely destroyed.

To find a collection site near you, visit: www.dea.gov and click on "Got Drugs?" or call 1-800-882-9539. The collection sites available in Delaware on April 28 are:

New Castle County

- University of Delaware Public Safety Bldg., Newark
- Christiana Care Health Services Parking Lot T, Newark
- New Castle Co. Police Department Headquarters
- New Castle Airport Terminal Bldg.
- Newark Senior Center
- Delaware City Refinery
- Delaware State Police Troop 1A, Wilmington
- Shipley Manor Nursing Home, Wilmington
- Frawley Stadium
- Middletown Police Station

Kent County

- Atlantic Apothecary, Smyrna
- Delaware Public Health Laboratory, Smyrna
- Dover Air Force Base, DAFB Exchange Bldg. 517
- Camden Municipal Building, Camden

Delaware State University, Dover
Dover Police Department
Felton Police Department
Harrington Police Department
Heritage at Dover Assisted Living

Sussex County

Lewes Ferry Terminal
Dagsboro Police Department
Laurel Police Department
Greenwood Police Department
Ocean View Police Department
Milford Police Department
Rehoboth Beach Police Department
South Bethany Police Department
Nanticoke Mears Health Campus, Seaford
Selbyville Town Hall
Tunnel Cancer Center, Rehoboth Beach
Bridgeville Fire Department

Additional Source

“The prescription drug take back event is vital to educating the general public about the safe-handling and protection of prescription medications,” said Randeep Kahlon, MD, President Medical Society of Delaware, Vice Chair Prescription Drug Action Committee. “The Medical Society of Delaware, through its leadership with the Division of Public Health on the Prescription Drug Action Committee, strongly advocates for improved public education about prescription drugs. This event today is important in educating the public about both the dangers and the disposal of these medications and we recognize that this kind of persistent and coordinated effort is a part of a long-term solution for Delaware.”

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